

REMARKS

Claims 26-47 are pending in the application.

Appropriate headings have been added to the specification, and claims from the literal translation have been replaced by claims drafted in conformity with U.S. Patent practice. An abstract has also been added to the specification.

The application in its amended state is believed to be in condition for allowance. However, should the Examiner have any comments or suggestions, or wish to discuss the merits of the application, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call in order to expedite placement of the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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* for Examiners Reference

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 – 25: Cancelled

26. (New) A method of extracting at least one plate from, and/or inserting at least one plate into, a stack (1, 2) of plates from below, including the steps of:
- providing at least two rests (3) for supporting the stack of plates;
 - horizontally moving the rests out of and/or into the of the stack (1, 2) of plates; and
 - for each extraction and/or insertion process, rotating the stack of plates through a prescribed angle of rotation, wherein such rotational movement is combined with the horizontal movement of the rests (3).
27. (New) A method according to claim 26 for extracting at least one plate (9) from a stack (2) of plates from below, including the steps of:
- a) supporting the stack of plates with at least two of the rests (3), wherein a lowermost plate (9) of the stack of plates rests on rim portions of the rests;
 - b) raising the stack (2) of plates such that the rests (3) are freed from said lowermost plate 9;
 - c) horizontally moving the rests (3) out the range of the stack (2) of plates;
 - d) lowering the stack (2) of plates to such an extent that the rests 3 are disposed at a level between said lowermost plate (9) and a plate disposed thereabove.
 - e) horizontally moving the rests (3) into a space between said lowermost plate (9) and that plate disposed thereabove; and
 - f) lowering said stack (2) of plates further until a second lowermost plate rests

on the rests 3.

28. (New) A method according to claim 26 for inserting a plate (9) into a stack 1 of plates from below, including the steps of:

- g) transporting the plate (9) that is to be inserted below the stack (1) of plates;
- h) raising the plate (9) that is to be inserted until the stack of plates rests thereupon;
- i) raising the plate (9) that is to be inserted, and the stack (1) of plates resting thereupon, further such that a lowermost plate (9) of a stack (1) of plates is freed from the rests (3) that support the stack of plates;
- j) horizontally moving the rests (3) out of the range of the stack (1) of plates;
- k) further raising the plate (9) that is to be inserted, together with the stack (1) of plates resting thereupon, until the rests (3) are disposed at a level below the plate that is to be inserted;
- l) horizontally moving the rests (3) below the plate 9 that is to be inserted; and
- m) lowering the plate (9) that is to be inserted and the stack (1) of plates resting thereupon, until it rests upon the rests (3).

29. (New) A method according to claim 26, which includes providing a single device for both an extraction as well as an insertion process.

30. (New) A method according to claim 36, wherein said rests (3) are moved out of the range of said stack (1,2) of plates when a plate is raised or lowered past said rests.

31. (New) A method according to claim 26, wherein a plate (9) extracted from a first stack (1) of plates is inserted into an adjacent stack (2) of plates.

32. (New) A method according to claim 26, wherein an extracted plate and/or a plate that is to be inserted is transported horizontally.

33. (New) A device for extracting a plate from, and inserting a plate into, a stack (1, 2)

of plates from below, comprising:

at least one lifting device (5) for vertically raising and lowering a plate (9) and/or a stack (1,2) of plates, wherein said at least one lifting device is provided with a plate seating means (6) that is rotatable through a prescribed angle of rotation, and wherein said plate seating means has a horizontal cam profile (13) and

at least one plate supporting device (4) having at least two rests (3) for supporting the plates (9) or the stack (1,2) of plates.

34. (New) A device according to claim 33, wherein the rests (3) of the plate supporting device (4) have a vertical cam profile (14) that cooperates with the horizontal cam profile (13) of the plate seating means (6)

35. (New) A device according to claim 34, wherein the plate supporting device (4) is provided with a biasing device (15) for pressing the vertical cam profile (14) against the horizontal cam profile (13) of the plate seating means (6).

36. (New) A device according to claim 35, wherein the biasing device (15) is a weight or a spring.

37. (New) A device according to claim 35, wherein a control surface of the horizontal cam profile (13) is formed such that upon rotation of the plate seating means (6) in a first direction of rotation, the control surface presses the biasing device (15) radially upwardly and out of the range of the stack (1,2) of plates, and upon rotation of the plate seating means (6) in a further direction of rotation, the control surface permits a controlled horizontal movement of the rests (3) radially inwardly into the range of the stack (1,2) of plates.

38. (New) A device according to claim 34, wherein a control surface of the vertical cam profile (14) is formed such that upon lowering of the at least one lifting device (5), the control surface is movable radially inwardly into the range of the stack (1,2) of plates, and upon raising of the lifting device (5), the control device is movable radially outwardly out of the range of the stack

1,2 of plates.

39. (New) A device according to claim 33, wherein a horizontal conveyor belt 8 is provided for transporting an extracted plate and/or a plate that is to be inserted.

40. (New) A device according to claim 33, wherein at least two stacks 1,2 of plates are provided, each with at least one lifting device and at least two plate supporting devices.

41. (New) A device according to claim 40, wherein the lifting devices 5 are provided with a common stroke-type driver device.

42. (New) A device according to claim 40, wherein the plate seating means 6 of the at least two lifting devices 5 are provided with a common rotary-type driver device 10, 11.

43. (New) A device according to claim 33, wherein the plates 9 are in the form of pallets for accommodating disks or substrates.

44. (New) A device according to claim 33, wherein central portions of the plates 9 are provided with a vertically upwardly projecting stud that, in the stack 1,2 of plates, centers a plate disposed above the first mentioned plate 9.

45. (New) A device according to claim 33, wherein outer portions of plates 9 in a stack 1,2 of plates are spaced from one another.

46. (New) A device according to claim 43, wherein the disks are optical data carriers.

47. (New) A device according to claim 43, wherein the stack is disposed in a cylinder in which the plates, pallets and/or disks are subjected to a stream of treatment medium, in particular a cooling medium.